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THE JACOB GUTTMANN JUBILEE VOLUME

Festschrift zum siebenzigsten Geburtstage Jacob Guttmanns. Herausgegeben vom Vorstande der Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums. Leipzig, 1915. Buchhandlung GUSTAV FOCK. pp. xvi + 283.

EVERY student of mediaeval Jewish philosophy will readily acknowledge the debt of gratitude which he owes to Dr. Jacob Guttmann, the well-known Rabbi of Breslau. By his numerous articles and treatises, dealing with the most representative exponents of Jewish rationalism in the Middle Ages, he has paved the way for a constructive study of this most interesting and most important branch of Jewish learning. Already in his early youth he devoted himself to the study of philosophy, and his doctor's thesis, published in 1868, deals with the relation of the philosophic systems of Descartes and Spinoza. This was followed by treatises on the works of the early Jewish philosophers, as Saadia, ibn Daud, Solomon ibn Gabirol, Isaac Israeli, and others. His studies of Maimonides were rather of a comparative character, showing the influence of others on his philosophy and his influence on the philosophy of those that followed him. Guttmann is also at home in the scholastic philosophy of the Middle Ages, and the relationship between this and the philosophy of the Jews is treated by him in several articles and pamphlets. All his works are characterized by a broad knowledge, full and clear comprehension, and originality of thought. While aiming at a truly scientific exposition of the subject under treatment, one cannot miss noticing in all his writings the warm sympathy of the author with everything that is Jewish and his great love for Jewish learning. He always approaches his subject with love and veneration, and this attitude does not detract from the critical value of his studies.

It was but natural that his many disciples and friends should wish to pay homage to his great services to Jewish learning on the occasion of his seventieth birthday anniversary. This homage expresses itself in the form of a number of valuable contributions in the realms of Jewish Philosophy, Jewish Law, Jewish Literature and Jewish History from the pens of eighteen representative Jewish scholars of our day. One of these contributors is the son of the celebrant, Julius Guttmann, who is following in the footsteps of his father and is making a name for himself in the fields of Jewish philosophy, and another is his brother-in-law, Dr. Simonsen of Copenhagen.

The preface to the volume is written by Prof. Martin Philippson, the late President of the 'Gesellschaft zur Förderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums', under whose auspices the volume is published. The writer pays a glowing tribute to the works and achievements of the celebrant, especially mentioning his great services to the society, which has produced a number of valuable works during the past few years. This is followed by a list of Guttmann's works, comprising 75 items, prepared by N. M. Nathan.

The first article is contributed by the Nestor of philosophic studies among the Jews of Germany, Dr. Hermann Cohen. The subject of the article is 'The Holy Spirit', as viewed from the Jewish point of view. He first analyses the meaning of the term 'spirit' in the Bible and shows how its early significance as wind (*animus*) gradually developed into the notion of holiness and ethical perfection. Spirit stands in direct antithesis to material in general, as well as to the material in life. Still, spirit and matter are united in all living beings, and especially in man. Through this union with the spirit in life comes the union of man with God, because 'the spirit is God'. God created the spirit of man as surely as he created the heavens and the earth. It is the spirit of man, indeed, but this spirit was given to him by God and it will return to God after its material abode is destroyed. What becomes of the spirit after its return to its Maker, this the monotheistic teaching does not reveal.

Holiness in the Jewish understanding of it implies the

spiritualizing of the concepts man and God and presumes the elevation of the service of God and of the conception of God to the highest ideals of mankind. God is holy, 'hallowed through righteousness' (Isa. 5. 16). This holiness, expressed in the term of the highest ideal of morality, becomes the heritage of man. The spirit is the gift of God to man; holiness also is the gift of God to man. 'I, the Lord your God, sanctify you' (Exod. 31. 13) is interpreted by the Rabbis to refer to the holiness coming through the performance of noble deeds *וְעוֹשֵׁי מִצְוֹת*. On the other hand, man is obliged to attribute holiness to God, i. e. the sanctification of God's name. Moses was punished because he neglected to do this at the time he was ordered to speak to the rock so that it might produce water, while the Jewish messianic ideal carries with it the hope for the complete fulfillment of the great idea of the sanctification of God's name through man.

The term 'holy spirit' occurs only twice in Isaiah and once in Psalms. In Isa. 63. 10, 11, the term used indicates only the fact that the holy spirit is the gift of God to man. In Psalm 51. 13, the true nature of the holy spirit is revealed to us. This is a penitential Psalm, in which the psalmist first prays for forgiveness (vv. 9, 13) and then for the recreation of a new heart and of a new spirit, so that by this renewal of the spirit sin may become annihilated. He then appeals to God not to take away 'His holy spirit' from him, the spirit which is the indestructible character of man, the correlation between man and God. Sin cannot destroy it. Sin becomes destroyed through the renewal of the spirit. Hence inherited sin is impossible, it contradicts the very notion of the holy spirit, which man has in common with God. The holy spirit is neither man nor God, but an attribute, a power common to both. God and man must remain distinct and separate, if they are to be united by means of the holy spirit, otherwise union would be impossible. In Judaism, the idea of the holy spirit rests entirely on the ethical life of the individual, and is common to Jew and non-Jew alike. Cohen introduces a large number of quotations from the Bible and Rabbinic

literature to illustrate the ideas which he endeavours to elucidate.

Dr. J. Cohn presents an illuminating explanation of a difficult passage in the Wisdom of Solomon (11. 18), which refers to the creation of the world. There it is said that God created the world out of 'formless primeval matter' (ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης). This expression contradicts the whole tenor of the book, which is written in the spirit of true Jewish tradition. Our author interprets this in the sense given to a similar expression of Gersonides, a most ardent follower of Aristotle, who speaks of the world as 'creatio ex nihilo' only in so far that it was not created out of any substance which has form. This formless substance (נשם נעדר, כל צורה) is interpreted as a pure abstraction, an idea that existed in the mind of the Creator.

Hasdai Crescas's criticisms of Aristotle's conceptions of space, time, and infinity form the subject of an exhaustive study by Julius Guttmann, the son of the celebrant. The author first analyses these criticisms, showing their strength and occasionally also their weakness. According to Guttmann, Crescas's discussion of Aristotle's Physics has no other purpose but to establish the entire independence of the proofs for the existence of a God from the Aristotelean conceptions of the world, which has formed the basis for the arguments of many Jewish philosophers who preceded him.

The problem of the attributes of God, which gave rise to so much discussion on the part of the Jewish mediaeval philosophers, also troubled the minds of the Rabbis of the Talmud, according to the opinion of S. Horovitz. The paraphrases of the Targum, which have been adduced as proof of an attempt to solve this problem, refer mainly to anthropomorphic or anthropopathic expressions in the Bible and do not show any consciousness of the difficulty of the problem. Horovitz mentions one citation from the Sifre (Num. section 153), which indicates a faint recognition of the difficulty. Philo declared that God was possessed of no qualities (ἄποιος), but Philo was unknown to mediaeval Jewry. Still there is enough in Talmudic literature to indicate a certain continuity in philosophic speculation. Horovitz, in

a second chapter, shows that the works of Maimonides and his study of God's attributes, while strongly influenced by Arabic philosophy, have exerted no influence on the development of Arabic philosophic thought. He doubts whether the works of the mediaeval Jewish philosophers were even known to the Arabs. He can point to only one passage in Senussi, an Arabic theologian of the fifteenth century, which shows an acquaintance with Maimonides' *More*. The third chapter of this article is devoted to an interpretation of a few terms used by Maimonides.

Julius Lewkowitz endeavours to establish the true meaning of the relation between God and man, from a modern scientific point of view. The most difficult phase in this relationship is to determine the exact meaning of individual providence. Before this can be determined, however, there are several vital questions, as the conception of God by man and the problem of man's freedom to act under such a relationship, which demand attention. Our author discusses these problems from the Jewish point of view, contrasting the Jewish idea of the inherent goodness of man with the Christian notion of the original depravity of the human nature and showing the proper place of the idea of God's grace in the ethical character of man. God's grace is extended to every individual, for every man is endowed with the possibilities of self-development. It is true that we are unable to explain the differences that exist in the natures of different human beings. We are, however, certain that God's providence and grace are extended alike to all individuals.

What position does religion occupy in the present human culture? Is it possible to find a basis for religious philosophy in modern culture and to harmonize it with the general trend of this scientific age? This is a very difficult problem that Albert Lewkowitz undertook to solve, and his solution will not satisfy the rational thinker of modern days. His analysis of the conception of religion as enunciated by Schleiermacher, who bases it on human emotions, and of Hermann Cohen, who seeks to establish a purely rational basis for it, is clear and convincing, but his own point of view is rather obscure.

While Kant has shown but little sympathy with Jews and with Judaism, Jews have been loyal followers of Kant and his philosophy. Markus Herz, Solomon Maimon, Bendavid, and especially the great modern Jewish philosopher, Hermann Cohen, have been devoted students of Kant and admirers of his philosophy. In order to explain this phenomenon, M. Steckelmacher endeavours to seek some inner harmony between the Kantian philosophy and the teachings of Judaism, of which the Königsberg sage himself was entirely unconscious. Kant's theory of time and space solves many of the difficulties that beset Jewish theologians, while his theory of ethics falls in perfect harmony with the moral law of the Bible and of later Jewish tradition. In a popular style the author lucidly sets forth several of the leading principles of the Kantian philosophy and compares them with similar teachings in Judaism with which they may be brought in accord. This closeness of ideas and relativity of thought, Steckelmacher thinks, accounts for the sympathy that Jewish thinkers felt with the philosophy of Kant to the extent of making them overlook even his ignorance and lack of appreciation of Jewish ideals and conceptions.

The second section of the book, dealing with Talmud and Midrash, is introduced by a contribution entitled 'Rome and the Mystics of the Merkabah', by Philip Bloch. The *Sefer Hekalot* or *Pirke Hekalot*, which is the product of the Mystics of the Merkabah (יורי מרכבה), contains, besides incantations and names of God and of angels, two historic documents—the story of the Ten Martyrs and the legend about Hananiah ben Tradyon. These our author undertakes to analyse and to determine through them the probable date of the composition of the book. The story of the Ten Martyrs, with its unmistakable signs of a period when Jews imparted knowledge to Christians, and its reference to the curse poured out on Rome, fits in with the period immediately following the accession of Gregory to the papacy, after 590. The legend of R. Hananyah b. Tradyon also points to the same period. A number of suggestive interpretations of the text are thrown out by the author in the course of the article. Although

he admits that his conjecture about the date of the book is only a surmise, not backed by any positive proof, he seems to be reasonably certain that the place of composition was Rome and the time about the middle of the seventh century. He ventures to suggest that the *Otiot derabbi Akiba*, and possibly also the *Sefer Yezirah* were composed in Rome, although he refrains from entering into a discussion of these subjects.

The meaning of the obscure term **חבר עיר**, which has given rise to many differences of opinion among scholars, is here again reviewed by Jakob Horovitz, in relation to several passages in which the term occurs. Our author is inclined to reject entirely the interpretation of Büchler in his 'Der galiläische Am Haarez', which aims to identify **חבר עיר** with regularly established organizations and societies. Our author, however, is undecided between the two earlier definitions of the term, that of R. Hai, which makes it identical with the learned or honoured men of the community, and that attributed to R. Hananel, which translates it as the community as a whole. In several places the latter meaning seems to be the more acceptable, while there are some passages in which the former rendering appears the more fitting. It is doubtful whether many will accept our author's explanation of the term as used in *Semahot* XI (p. 138). The distinction drawn by him between the **ברכת אבלים** and the **סעודת הכראה** (p. 141) appears logical and in agreement with the text, although the suggested, ingenuous emendation of **עיר** for **רחב עיר** may not be accepted.

N. A. Nobel, in a brief contribution, endeavours to draw a comparison between the Talmudic law regarding the commission of several crimes or sins at the same time and the Roman *concursum delictorum*. The study is short and inadequate and the author promises to give a more detailed presentation of the subject at some future time.

The foremost living authority on the *Midrash Rabba*, J. Theodor, publishes here three unknown Parashahs of *Bereshit Rabbah* (95-97) from a Vatican manuscript. In his introduction, Dr. Theodor argues that these Parashahs unmistakably belong

to Bereshit Rabba, as shown both by the diction and by the context. The manuscript was apparently unknown to the various commentators and editors of the Midrash Rabba, with the possible exception of the compilers of the Midrash Haggadol. The text itself is accompanied by many notes by the author.

The third section contains contributions on subjects related to the history of Jewish literature. This begins with an article by the late Leopold Cohn, entitled 'Pseudo-Philo and Jerahmeel'. In 1898, Cohn called attention in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW to an almost forgotten work ascribed in the Middle Ages to Philo, which is a kind of Midrash to ancient history, up to the time of King David. Cohn returns here to a consideration of the same work, in connexion with the Chronicles of Jerahmeel, published by M. Gaster in 1899. The main purpose of the author is to disprove Gaster's theory that the compiler of the Jerahmeel legend had before him a copy of the Hebrew original of the Pseudo-Philo. Cohn tries to prove that Jerahmeel did not see the Hebrew at all, but received his information from the Latin translation. At the end of the article the author expresses doubt whether the compiler of Jerahmeel saw the Pseudo-Philo at all, and whether he had not received all his knowledge from a secondary source altogether.

A splendid *résumé* of Abraham ibn Daud's historical works סדר הקבלה וזכרון דברי רומי, דברי מלכי ישראל בבית שני and their value as historical source books, is presented by I. Elbogen. He first gives the general contents of the three treatises and then endeavours to show that they were all 'Tendenzschriften', written for special purposes which the author had in mind. The Seder ha-Kabbalah, according to Elbogen, was written for the purpose of refuting the contentions of the Karaites against tradition, the History of the Kings to show that the Messiah has not yet appeared, notwithstanding the Karaite claims, and that only a scion of the house of David can be recognized as the Messiah, and the Roman History to show that the Christian era is not accurate and that the Gospels were composed long after the death of Jesus. Elbogen then proceeds to show the sources

from which ibn Daud drew his information and the manner in which he treated these sources. Ibn Daud was not a critical historian, was given to exaggeration, and frequently referred events to the influence of the supernatural. His style, however, is always clear and attractive. His works were greatly used by all subsequent Jewish historians and were translated into Latin and studied by Christian scholars.

The oft quoted Kabbalistic works *אגרת הסודות* and *גליה רזי* are the works of Paulus de Heredia, who lived in the middle of the fifteenth century, according to A. Freimann. In a little book, now exceedingly rare, Paulus de Heredia propounds eight questions, most of which pertain to the trinity. The questions and answers are put in the mouth of Nehunyah ben Hakkanah, who gives the answers in the name of Rabbenu Hakadosh. It appears that Paulus, or some one else, later translated the same book into Hebrew. The book was passed unnoticed by Jews, although it is frequently quoted by Christian theologians.

D. Simonsen, a brother-in-law of the celebrant, brings together several *responsa* of Maimonides and of his son Abraham, which have either never been published before or were published in a corrupt form of translation. The first *responsum* deals with the question of the repetition of the 'Amidah by the precentor, and the second with the question whether one is obliged to turn to the wall while reciting the 'Amidah. The third deals with a civil question directed to him by the Dayyan Pincus b. Elijah of Alexandria.

A more lengthy *responsum* by Abraham Maimonides is given at the end of the article. This deals with an incident of historical importance and throws considerable light on the gentleness and modesty of the son of the great philosopher. The question involved a personal controversy between the Dayyan Joseph b. Gershon of Alexandria, a native of France, and the Nasi Hodyah b. Yishai. This Hodyah was until now unknown to Jewish history.

The fourth section of this volume, devoted to Jewish history, begins with an exceedingly interesting article by M. Brann

relating to the Silesian Jewish community. The purpose of the article is to present a letter written by a certain Solomon Bloch of London to his father Hirsch Bloch of Langendorf, Silesia, dated January 28, 1763. The letter is written in the Yiddish spoken at that time by German Jews, and throws much light on the life of the Jews in Germany in the middle of the eighteenth century and is also of considerable interest to American Jewish history. The oppressive laws which forbade the marriage of more than one son in a Jewish family drove many young Jews to seek their fortunes in distant lands. This Solomon Bloch settled in London, while another brother, Koppel, emigrated to America and settled for a time in Philadelphia, under the name of Jacob Henry. Both he and his relative Barnard Gratz were first employed in the business of David Franks in Philadelphia. The author, in his notes, shows a familiarity with the early history of the Jews in Philadelphia. He also acknowledges the assistance given to him in this matter by Judge Mayer Sulzberger. This interesting document is preceded by a general *résumé* of the conditions of Jewish life in Silesia, in which the genealogy of the writer of this letter is traced.

A. Lewinsky, who succeeded Guttman as Rabbi of Hildesheim, after the latter had occupied that position for eighteen years, presents here a few extracts from the *Hildesheimer Relations-Courier* of the years 1748-1754, which pertain to the history of the Jews in Germany during that period. It is interesting to note the references made in that journal to the Emden-Eibesbüttel controversy in Altona. Most of the other notices deal mainly with local events or with government ordinances affecting Jews.

The volume concludes with an illustrated article on the Hebrew Inscriptions in the Aleppo Synagogue, compiled by M. Sobernheim and E. Mittwoch. The synagogue in Aleppo is one of the oldest synagogues in the world. It was probably first erected in the fifth or sixth century, although Abbé Chagnot is of the opinion that portions of it were erected as early as the fourth century. M. Sobernheim copied some of the inscriptions found on the walls of the several chapels of the synagogue

and E. Mittwoch provided the commentary. The article is accompanied also by a plan of the structure as well as by several photographs of views of the synagogue.

The first inscription given here is dated 833 and refers to a cupola which was donated by one 'Ali ben Nathan ben Mebasser ben האדם. The last name is rather unusual, but the reading given by Adler (*Jewish Encyclopaedia*, s.v. Aleppo) is rejected by Mittwoch. He derives it from the Arabic word meaning a servant (خادم). The second inscription, dated 1414, refers to the erection of six columns, donated by one Eliezer Halevi ben Elijah in memory of his sons Joseph and Ismael, and a daughter, whose name is not given. The third inscription is dated 1407 (in the text the date is given by mistake as 1417) and refers to the donation of an ark by one Abraham ben Jacob Hakohen. The fourth inscription, dated 1404, is more elaborate and refers to the rebuilding of a ceiling, columns and thresholds, donated by one Saadael ben Obadiah.

It is probably due to the present cataclysm in Europe that Jewish scholars living in countries at war with Germany have not sent their contributions to this volume. We miss several prominent names of Jewish scholars residing in Russia, England, or France, who should have contributed to a volume in honour of Jacob Guttman. It is, however, strange that none of the American Jewish scholars participated in the homage paid here to the scholar and Rabbi. A note explaining this should have appeared in the preface, if there is a plausible explanation for it.

JULIUS H. GREENSTONE.

Gratz College.